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Senior Health and Wellness Newsletter

Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living

Occupational Therapists Can Help with Assistive Devices

Occupational Therapists are health professionals who are skilled in assisting people with maximizing their independence in daily activities. Occupational Therapists educate people in using adaptive equipment to assist with daily activities that can help decrease pain and increase independence and safety.

There are various kinds of adaptive equipment you can use to assist with your self-care. Often, simple adaptive equipment is available at your local pharmacy or can be found at a durable medical equipment store.

Self-Care

Elastic shoe strings are useful in lace up shoes to convert to slip on shoes. Elastic shoe strings are ideal for persons with arthritis in the hands. By not having to lean over to tie your shoes, a fall may be prevented.



Long handled shoe horns also enable a person to put their shoes on without bending over and potentially falling. Simply slip the wide end of the shoe horn into the back of your shoe then slide your foot into your shoe. Once your heel is in the shoe, simply remove the shoe horn.

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Use “reachers” or “grabbers” to assist with putting on undergarments, pants and shoes. Using a reacher for the lower body decreases strain on your back and hips and prevents falls from leaning over too far.

Bathroom Equipment

Tub transfer benches allow for independence and safety in the shower. You simply sit on the bench and slide yourself over then raise your legs into the bathtub. Many tub transfer benches come with a handle for added safety.

If you would like to be assessed for appropriate adaptive equipment needs, contact an Occupational Therapist in your area. Licensed Occupational Therapists are available through your local home health or physician’s office.

When you call your pharmacy or durable medical equipment store, ask if they will deliver adaptive equipment to your home. Be sure to ask about the delivery fee.



For more information:

American Occupational Therapist Association: <http://www.aota.org>

Kentucky Occupational Therapist Association: <http://www.kotaweb.org/>

Kentucky Home Care Association: <http://www.khha.org>

Special Thanks to Victoria Elridge for the provision of this article.

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